

PROFESSOR ATTFIELD AT HOME

BY OUR OWN REPRESENTATIVE

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“Watford! Watford!” And I was startled out of the comfortable corner of a compartment in a train on the London and North Western Railway. It was Saturday, the 3rd of March. I was outward bound from London to Watford, with the purpose avowed and condoned of seeing Professor Attfield at home in Watford. Naturally enough, before the rude awakening by the railway porter, I had been musing over the object of my visit, and had just been tempted to measure Professor Attfield's fame in the world of pharmacy by Virgil's phrase, *famam qui terminet astris*, when I was summoned to attention.

Watford it may be said, for the benefit of our non-London reader, who has not the map in mind or at hand, is situated 17 miles north-west of the City of London, in the county of Hertford. Professor Attfield's house is, --- well, no, on second thoughts, I recollect what a nuisance it sometimes becomes, if a prominent man's private address becomes too public. So we will say simply that it is situated just far enough away from the railway station to ensure quiet, and just near enough to give convenience. Perhaps you can identify it, however, by our photograph, which gives a view of the house from a sheltered nook near the gate. On the right of the picture you see the east porch entrance; the two windows immediately on the left of this are those of the drawing-room, the one further still on the left that of the dining-room, whilst the extreme window on the right of the picture and of the porch is that of the library. It is to this last room that the way is led, after the first greeting. And here we take seats amid surroundings that remind us of various phases in the history of our host or of various duties still occupying his maturer years. We sink down in a couple of easy chairs, the fire is given a poke, and, at the Professor's invitation, we commence to survey the furniture more closely. Each article points a moral or adorns a tale, and so it is a mere question with which we shall begin. But I am sitting opposite a book-case, occupying the whole of one wall, and the sight of its contents, and a consequent remark from me probably decides the matter.

THE CONFERENCE GIFT

“Yes,” says Professor Attfield, as we walk towards the case, “a very handsome present, the 500 volumes given to me by the Pharmaceutical Conference on my retirement in 1880, from the senior secretaryship. They kindly allowed me to choose them, so I was enabled to select

those which I most wanted, or rather which the members of my family wanted; for, you see, even yet my duties hardly give me time for much reading, apart from my professional subjects. There you see above on the wall the address given to me on the same occasion with the books." The doors of the case are opened, and we take a dip into the contents of a few. Here are brought together the masterpieces of our English literature. Scott and Dickens have joined fellowship, Macaulay and John Richard Green have consented to be separated only by a thin septum; the fervour of Shelley is added to the chivalry of Tennyson, and all are given the sumptuous dressing which they richly deserve. Some years ago educators of various kinds constructed for us lists of "100 best books," which we, as their disciples, felt bound to obtain and read as best we might; here the process is reversed, the self-confessed disciples invite their teacher to construct a list of 500 best books for his own use, and the want is supplied. I have said "self-confessed disciples," for did not the chairman at this conference, Mr. Schacht himself, speak of the "higher life of mental culture" which their secretary and the editor of their Year Book had held up for "admiration and achievement." One is reminded of the duties associated with the office of secretaryship to the Conference as one handles these books, the organisation and development of the Conference from its birth in 1863 to the retiring year, the qualities for the furtherance of which will be exemplified again and again as the day goes on.

But our attention is called away now to the evidences of other associations. On the right of the Conference case are books, many from private friends well-known in the world of pharmacy. The corner diagonally opposite to this, however, takes my fancy, for in this, the host says, is the book-case of his bachelor student days. Yet its old contents are linked to those of recent times by the presence of the latest reprints of the Pharmacopoeia. Yea, if I remember aright, the London Pharmacopoeia of 1851, represented by Phillips' translation, annotated by Mr. Attfeld, student, is within short distance of the British Pharmacopoeia of 1885, annotated by Dr. Attfeld, professor. And the range of the editions between is represented in the case or on the shelves beneath. The edition of 1851 may be taken to represent the years of 1853 and 1854 in the life of Dr. Attfeld. In those two years he was a student at Bloomsbury Square, and this assiduous noting in his "Phillips'" had its reward in the passing of the Minor and the taking of the first prizes in each one of the four branches of science cultivated for the Minor examination. This seemed, as it were, the crowning point in one stage of that scientific career which he had commenced four years previously under Mr. William Frederick Smith. Professor Attfeld still fondly remembers this early triumph. "My father," says he, "was so pleased that he gave me ten pounds, and told me to take a holiday trip with the honey. I went to the Isle of Wight, and had a capital walking tour." Of these and other holiday tours the Professor preserves two complete tangible records – the guide books he used on the way, and a chronological reference table of the places visited. The former are preserved in a case on the other side of the door from that where are situated the

pharmacopoeias. Guide books, as we all know, the more useful they have proved in use the less ornamental they become when out of use. It is only consonant with Professor Attfield's character, therefore, that he should have adopted some means of hiding the unsightly appearance of the shelved guide-book. He has done this by means of a simple book-back front, which serves as a barricade behind which the guide-books conceal their infirmity. The last two objects we have seen in the library – the early Pharmacopoeia and the guide-book arrangement – instance a feature in Professor Attfield's character so fundamental that perhaps its mention ought to come early in this article.

SYSTEMA OMNIA VINCIT

This is a phrase on which variations are played to suit the beliefs of various men. Thus one tells us that "*labor omnia vincit*"; another substitutes "*patientia*," and so on; but Professor Attfield might say, "*Systema omnia vincit*." "I inherited my methodical habits," he said. "You see here in the early Pharmacopoeia the same principle illustrated as in my present copy; so that what served me to good purpose as a young student still does so when I am Pharmacopoeia Reporter." And as he turned over the leaves of the 1851 Pharmacopoeia the same method of noting was seen as will be described later on in the case of the modern book. I am greatly interested in the old Pharmacopoeia, but we have only time to look over a page or two, for some feature suggests a remark, and off we are led to another subject. I should have expected the author of "Attfield's Chemistry" to be methodical, but I was not prepared for the next remark. "It may interest you to know that I am of a mechanical turn of mind," said the professor; "I believe if I had not been a chemist I should have been an engineer. I'll show you one or two little things about the house soon of my invention. Here is something, however, at hand to illustrate it. I have shown you in this cupboard how I keep the weekly and monthly journals; in this next one you will see something very different. "There!" as he opened the door, and I stooped down to have a look at the tiniest, neatest, most complete carpenter's shop I have seen, and how well it proved the motto at the head of this paragraph! For bradawl, gimlet, &c., &c., had each its appropriate place, numerous boxes of screws and nails of all sizes, each size in its own box, and each box labelled outside with its own screw, all there as well arranged as possible. This is only the first evidence of the mechanical turn of mind, for in our saunter over the house and round the grounds all sorts of neat contrivances are met. It was immediately after lunch that Professor Attfield, inviting me to take a cigar – he does not smoke himself by the way – proposed a stroll round. "Seven times round equal two miles," says he as we are walking round the outer path, "so that it makes a good constitutional. You see we are very quiet here." We take the turn to our left at the door and pass along a shady walk to the end of the wall, then turn the corner and proceed to the end again. Here we come to a spot which I have been curious to see. "It so

happens," Dr. Attfield had said, "that the sheets of each edition of my Manual have been prepared in the vacation. That means in the summer months, and so the work has come to be done out of doors under a shady tree in one corner of the garden." Here was the tree, and it was settled that the interest which it must have for pharmacists necessitated a photo being taken. There is a long view of two garden paths from the seat, and the corner is the farthest away from the road – a model seat for gaining the calm quiet suitable for the author's work. We leave the seat and pass on. This part of the grounds is green meadow-land, but soon we enter the kitchen-garden. Professor Attfield has much to say in praise of his gardener – "getting old and deaf, poor fellow, but a good man. He has been with me ever since I bought the house in 1876 – in fact was here before I came; always keeps us well supplied with everything." He goes in the little cabin to give the old man a cheery word, and then we have a peep in the hot-house near. The same method and neatness is visible everywhere. The hot-house is near the boundary line of the kitchen-garden, and this latter is surveyed in similar manner, and so we finish our round of the garden and go towards the stables. The Professor is anxious to show the advantage of a patent brick flooring of the stable-yard – another idea of his own. The makers, whose advising chemist he is, have constructed a brick, with a central groove running length-wise, and these are laid so that the grooves all run towards the central grating. "No cross grooves, and no dirt or straws get stuck in them," as the host says. We enter the buildings and note the continuation of the brick floor. The stable is four-stalled and spotlessly clean. A favourite horse is peacefully feeding in one stall. He turns round to welcome us, and after a word with him we mount to the loft, and so we go on from room to room. I admire the tidy habits of the groom, and asked my host how he could manage to get men to follow out his methods and plans. "Oh," said he, "they have to get into it; but I would not engage a man who is not methodical." We have proofs of the successful training round us, and the Professor soon illustrates one way of keeping his men "up to the scratch." For after stepping under a roof, which covers in the water-pump, attention is drawn to a little notice put up. "I never have a burst pipe," says Dr. Attfield in explanation. "In the winter months, as soon as the house cisterns are filled from the pump, the man must turn open these taps, and the pipes conveying the water to the cisterns empty themselves. Therefore, there is no water in the pipes and no freezing; consequently no bursting. I subject the man to a fine of 1s. if he omits to empty the pipes; and I do fine him too." This is only one example of many to ensure comfort by the application of some simple device, or a chemical or physical law. While we are looking at the pump Professor Attfield points to a little bobbin outside the wall of the main building. This, it is explained, is connected with a floating ball within one of the water cisterns inside the building, and the rise and fall of the bobbin outside the wall is a guide to the man as he pumps into the cistern from the pump-house outside.

We have now worked our way back again to the house, and we enter the cosy west porch. Ere we return to the library we make a tour of the house itself, and multiply our witnesses for the truth of the motto I have dared to give Professor Attfield, I could not describe them all – so ingenious, so serviceable, and so simple that I mentally exclaim many a time, “Why not thought of before!” But I feel I have given enough to illustrate this side of the Professor's character, and I must now touch only on what derives its interest from other causes. Happily, the drawing-room to which we now proceed serves this purpose, it testifies to the many warm friendships which my host in such a long public career must have formed. A glass cabinet under the window brings fresh to memory scenes in the past history of his loved science – the death of a famous German contemporary, the jubilee of a French savant, a crisis in the history of a college of pharmacy or a school of chemistry, &c. There are medals to remind us of Flückiger and Chevreul, and, by association, to remind us, too, of the time Professor Attfield spent away from his native land at the university of Tübingen, where he gained the degrees of master of arts and doctor of philosophy, and for his original research was highly complimented, and where, also, the paper on the “Spectrum of Carbon,” read at a meeting of the Royal Society in 1862, received additional encomiums. There are “curios” galore to remind us of old students who have gone abroad and sent home rich “finds” to their old teacher, and mementos, too, of his own wanderings far and wide in Switzerland and other lands; and with the examination of these, time flies so quickly that I am surprised at the growing dusk, and long to look on and on. There is still much to be done, however, and we must leave these interesting gifts and keepsakes and once more return to the library. Our easy chairs are re-taken. The scene I have just left and the gathering gloaming induce a current of thought retrospective, and my mind goes back to the early days of the Professor. “Will you tell me,” I said,

“HOW THE MANUAL WAS WRITTEN?”

Then the Professor reverts to a phase in his early life when he was a demonstrator of chemistry at St. Bartholomew's, under Professor Frankland, in 1857, and for four years after. While in this position he drew up a manuscript “course of practical chemistry” for his students. This was a modest little thing of six sheets of analytical tables for the separation of metals and collected tests for each. There were six copies of it in use among the students. Yet, though so small, it was the outcome of the wants which have guided the structure of the Manual ever since. It differed, as the Manual differs from most text-books, in one great thing. What is it that constitutes the feature of the present text-book? It is a response to the daily needs of the student in chemistry; it is not merely the outward expression of the writer's knowledge. The author asks himself, before he puts down information on a subject, “What do my readers want to know on this subject?” not “what do I know?” This character

of the book was necessarily given to it by the method of its formation. The students at Bart's came to their demonstrator and asked, "How shall I test so-and-so? In what book shall I find this?" There was often no book to tell them, and Mr. Atfield must give the information there and then. The number of students grew, questions were repeated, and so the demonstrator wrote them down, and the little manuscript sheet was formed. But before the Manual could be written, knowledge grows for years and is digested; more wants of students arise and are duly noted, and hence the history of the period between the writing of the little practical sheets and the publication of the Manual is truly part of the history of the Manual. Let us, therefore, briefly scan this period.

It was immediately after leaving the Society's school that the young teacher proceeded to Bart's. Besides his tutorial duties while there he assisted in many researches. His students showed their appreciation of his services by a testimonial, still preserved by their old tutor. In 1855 he started on a new period in his career, commencing to give public lectures at various institutes. These, however, were interspersed with others delivered before a more critical audience. Thus we hear of him giving one, recording his first original research, before the Pharmaceutical Students' Association on the "Solubility of Mercurial Precipitates in Alkaline Salts"; again, in the absence of Dr. Stenhouse, he delivered the regular lecture to the medical students at the hospital. As he increased his performances in each line of duty so he increased his lines of duty. We soon see him contributing to scientific and popular periodicals. The leading articles in several daily papers on chemical and pharmaceutical subjects came from his pen. One, written a little after the period which we are just describing, in 1868, we give here. It will, no doubt, interest our readers to see what the Professor's ideas on a subject, still much vexed, were nearly 30 years ago. It is re-printed from the Express, of June 29th, 1868.

THE SALE OF POISONS

We have already explained the character of the Bill to regulate the sale of poisons and extend the Pharmacy Act of 1852, which has passed the House of Lords, and which is now before the House of Commons. Its promoters seek to protect the lives of the public by improving the qualifications of the druggist. But an attempt was made in the House of Lords to introduce a clause enforcing the use of a bottle of peculiar form for various poisons mentioned in the schedule of the Bill, and there is still some agitation in favour of the plan. We think the idea a foolish one. Why should peculiar, say three-sided or triangular, bottles alone be used? Why not triangular pots, jars, drawers, cupboards, casks, bags and boxes? Why not pyramidal opium pills and triangular pestles and mortars? A man was once killed through swallowing saltpetre in mistake for Epsom salts, an accident which would probably have been prevented had the druggist taken the article from a triangular compartment and wrapped it as a three-

cornered parcel; but is every tradesman who deals in saltpetre to be put to endless trouble and inconvenience to avoid the possible consequences of each a case of carelessness? Then how shall we define the substances for which these vessels are to be employed? What is a poison? Powerful poisons are excellent medicines in small quantities, and most medicines become poisonous when taken in large quantities, therefore poison relates to quantity rather than material. The quantity which is poison to a child may be medicine to a man or poison to the same man under different circumstances. So that for the broad purposes of legislation the compounds for which poison-vessels are to be constructed cannot be defined. Nor would a schedule of substances to be deemed poisons for the purposes of the proposed triangular pot-and-bottle clause remove the difficulty. The exigencies of trade require that some of the worst poisons should be omitted from such a schedule. Hence a dangerous lotion would often be placed in the safety-bottle and a harmless medicine in a danger-bottle. The angularity of a vessel would not, moreover, prevent a druggist, his porter, a servant, a nurse, or a patient, from mistaking a bottle containing a weak poison from one containing strong, or a poisonous quantity being swallowed instead of a proper dose. As a general rule we believe that invalids would rather not know that the draughts they are taking include what is conventionally termed poison. It is also undesirable that every evil-disposed person that may be attached to a household should be reminded by the shape of a bottle that something dangerous to health, if not life, is always at hand. To propose that the shape or surface of a bottle should preserve us from the consequences of not reading a label, is to propose that the sense of touch should supersede that of sight. To supplement, if not override, common sense and the faculties of observation and reflection by mechanical contrivances of questionable merit, is a principle at once retrogressive and mischievous.

The English Encyclopaedia benefited from the studies of the rising chemist to the extent of over 200 articles, on such subjects as coal tar, volumetric analysis, the alkaloids of cinchona, &c., &c. No wonder that these multifarious duties soon had baneful effects. In 1859 typhoid fever prostrated the ardent worker for several months. He was soon at work again, however, and in 1862 he gave the results of the research on the "Spectrum of Carbon," already referred to, and in the same year became F.C.S. Early on in the year he had figured in his professional capacity for the first time in a law court, and before it closed he was installed as Professor of Practical Chemistry to the Pharmaceutical Society. This was, therefore, a most important year in his career. More than ever now would be enforced on him the wants of the aspirant for chemical knowledge, and we are not surprised, therefore, to hear that the Manual now began to take definite shape. All these years material had been increasing and method had been developing, which should ensure a book in many ways unique. We have now brought the history of the Professor's life up to the point where we can properly discuss, in a little more detail, the making of the book. As I have already said, it was within the comfortable library at Watford that I heard the particulars of the book's publication. Five

years were taken over the elaboration of the book, even after its construction had definitely been started. In 1867 the manuscript was ready; let Professor Attfield tell the rest.

“When the manuscript was ready, I went to my old friend Dr. Frankland. I told him that I had a book on chemistry ready for publication, and asked him whom he would advise as publisher. ‘Well,’ said Dr. Frankland, ‘I know that Van Voorst has gone in lately for publishing scientific works, and I believe he wishes to publish some works on chemistry. Besides, you know, he is publishing the Journal of the Chemical Society, so I should think he’ll be just the man for you.’ I thought Dr. Frankland’s advice very good, and called on Van Voorst and showed him the manuscript of my book. He asked me to leave it, and I did so, his intention being to consult one or two friends – experts – about it. When I called on him again a little later he said, ‘I am inclined to think your book will do; my friends think highly of it. But, of course, there is always some risk about the sale of a book. Now, are you prepared to invest some money in it, or shall I undertake the furnishing of the money necessary for its production?’ I elected to follow the latter of Van Voorst’s proposals. He, therefore, made me an offer of a certain percentage of the profits on the sale of the book as the purchase-money of my manuscript. After consulting one or two friends I accepted Van Voorst’s offer. And so the book was published.”

As we all know now, the book succeeded well, and Van Voorst had no cause to regret the bargain. Indeed, he stated some time after that he was only doing justice in offering Professor Attfield a larger share of the profits, and he did so. With the American edition it was somewhat different. Of course, until recently it was open to any publisher to “crib” the whole of a book published in this country and reproduce it across the water. The American publisher on whom was urged the publication of “Attfield’s Chemistry” in Trans-Atlantic dress, knew this, of course, perfectly well; but it was a credit to his foresight that he recognised that no adaptation of the book would be so good as the author’s. So he wrote to the author, asking him to adapt the book to the United States Pharmacopoeia, and of course, offering to remunerate him as the adaptator, not as the author. So we find in the old and the new country “Attfield’s Chemistry” going from edition to edition, swelling in matter and enlisting more readers with every one. How it is kept up to date is perhaps a wonder to our readers. Happily, I can tell them a little about the *modus operandi* of its present day structure.

I had noticed eight or nine piles of proofs standing on one side of the library, and was informed that these were proofs of the Manual, and Professor Attfield had continued in explanation: “I have four sets of proofs sent to me, printed, of course, now, from an old copy of the book, with the alterations and additions made in it. One of these proofs I immediately send off to Manchester to an assistant of mine – my youngest assistant in fact, who may be taken to represent the most recent items of knowledge; one I give to my son; and one I keep

myself; the fourth goes back to the printer. Each one of us makes his corrections and additions on his own proof, and then all the corrections and additions are made on to the fourth proof, which, as I have said goes to the printer. Next, I receive four sets of revised proofs from the printer, which are dealt with in a similar way, being distributed as before. The fourth goes back to the printer, and from that is constructed the book. I receive for my own use an interleaved copy, and from the day the book is published I treat it as an old edition. That is, I commence to keep it abreast of fresh investigations by regularly inserting on the blank page opposite the printed matter on the subject in the book any note culled from a journal, or the result of work in my own laboratory worth recording on the same subject.”

THE B.P. AND ADDENDUM

“My duties as Reporter on the Pharmacopoeia are performed in a similar manner as you see by this copy. It is printed on very thin paper, and interleaved in precisely the same way. A certain Saturday, once a month, is set aside for the annotating on the blank pages of current work on the matter of the Pharmacopoeia. These notes are the basis of fresh suggestions, made in my capacity as Reporter, for the consideration of the Medical Council and Pharmacopoeia Committee. Practice and experience, of course, enable one to rapidly extract the pith of a scientific paper, and put it in a very few words.”

“You must go through a very large number of periodicals in the course of this work.”

“Oh, yes; a great many, but it is surprising” (laughing) “how little really useful matter is written, considering the number of papers published. However, you see, there has been quite sufficient to cause the bursting of the binding of my copy through the insertion of fresh pages, excerpts, &c.” While this conversation was going on, the pages of the interleaved copy were being turned over. Some of the pages blank a few months ago were now crammed from corner to corner with notes from papers of many nationalities. British, French, German and American journals form, as might be expected, the chief source of information. When I had satisfied my curiosity with this, Professor Attfeld described the making of the Addendum. This is rather different. When the authorities decide on the issuing of an addendum to the Pharmacopoeia, requests are sent round to the various medical schools and universities, with which, of course, are connected hospitals, asking them to name substances suitable for treatment in the Addendum. When the answers to these requests are received, the names of the various articles suggested are alphabetically printed in a small pamphlet. Down one column of each page run these names, down other parallel columns are stars in a horizontal line with the name of the article to which they have reference. Each of these stars represents a vote for the article in a line with it. On referring

to the head of each column in which the stars are, one sees the name of the medical body from which the recommendation comes. This description will be better understood by a typical page as under, in which, however, it will be seen fictitious names, &c., are used.

Article	King's	Queen's	Duke's	Lord's	Commons	Remarks
Tincture Cujusvis	*					
Oleum Elephantis			*			
Adeps Anseris				*		
Aqua Vitae		*				
Lapis Philosophi					*	

This list will be understood from the description preceding it. Thus "King's" recommends the inclusion of Tinct. Cujusvis, "Queen's" the inclusion of Aqua vitae, &c. It goes to the same medical bodies as before after it is arranged as above, so that they may confirm, or otherwise, their previous vote when they see the support it has received from others, and may pass any remarks they please. On the return of these lists the committee decides on which shall be included in the Addendum. Those which are recommended unanimously, or nearly so, are adopted without much discussion. Similarly, those receiving only one vote or so are rejected. Those between these extremes have their fortune settled by more consideration. Thus the articles to be included in the Addendum are selected. The editor's work is then carried out by pasting slips bearing the names of these articles in alphabetical order in a blank note-book. Then comes, under the various heads, the matter bearing on each, which is carefully collected and judiciously selected. Finally, the manuscript is drawn up, proofs follow, corrections are made, and gradually the perfecting is made. No one would dispute that much care must be exercised in bringing out a work of so much importance, but few could guess, what a number of proofs, each one representing more correction, are required before the book finally goes to press.

THE VALUE OF A LETTER-BOOK

By this time I had got some idea of the amount of work got through by my host. Even with all this method I felt sure there must be some assistance needed. I thought of the amount of correspondence that all his work must entail, and so I asked, "Of course you have someone to relieve you of much of your correspondence?" "The greater part of it I do myself," was

the answer. Then, taking up his letter-book, he continued, "This is my sheet anchor." It was the ordinary form of letter-book. There is a novelty in connection with it, however. Professor Attfield does away with the usual mechanism of copying; a copy of his letters is made directly from the paper into the book. To do this he uses an ink differing from the usual writing fluid by the substitution of 40 per cent of glycerine for the same volume of water. Thus he gets an ink which remains moist when transferred with the pen to paper, until a side of letter paper is filled with it. The sheet of paper is then simply pressed within the letter book and a copy is obtained. Lest readers, struck with the simplicity of this, should attempt the same process, I had better add a few words of caution which the Professor gave me. Remember to make your up and down strokes of an even thickness, and practise till you just put enough ink on; the non-observance of these rules may cause failure. With practice you will succeed, though it is hardly likely you will benefit so much as Professor Attfield has done by it. The letter-book at present on his table is marked vol. lxxiii., so I need say little more to show how early he began this system. Each of the volumes has 500 pages and is indexed; there is also an "*index rerum*," or index of all the indices. For 32 years these books have been accumulating, and the strain on the memory saved must be very great. The one in use accompanies its owner everywhere he sojourns. It makes regular journeys to Bloomsbury Square, and is not forgotten when the Professor leaves Watford, when engaged in one of those big legal cases in which we see him figuring, or, on other business. In its being thus for use "at home or abroad," it resembles his writing-case, and even his ink-stands. For the writing-case is made of leather to the Professor's own design, and lies open on the table in the library for use there or is shut up, the ink-stands from the table packed away in it, and letter-book also, and all other writing requisites, and thus it peregrinates the country.

HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF

By the time I had satisfied my curiosity on the letter-book, &c., darkness had grown apace, lights had long ago been brought in, and a glance at the clock showed me it was time to go. I racked my brains to see if there was anything more by asking questions on which I might try further the patience of my host and gratify the readers of the B. & C. D. It seems that every period of his life has been told or pictured by mementos of some kind, which have been shown to me. Stay, the most important crisis in a man's life (is it *in* it or *before* it?) I have forgotten—that is his birth; and therewith is connected a remarkable feature. The Attfield family is a Hertfordshire one. If you are curious to know more of it, the rector of Windlesham, Surrey, can show you old documents relating to John Attfields of the past who have figured as lords of the manor and patrons of the living in that district. A member of the family—also a "John"—crossed over to Hampton from his native county. From him there sprang a son, whose name may be seen on the prefatory pages of the 1677 Pharmacopoeia

Londiniensis, and succeeding editions, duly inscribed therein as Johannes Attfield. He was one of the Fellows of the Royal College of Physicians responsible for the production of the Pharmacopoeia. The present John Attfield was born near Barnet, in the county of his ancestors, in 1835. Our readers know well enough his connection with the Pharmacopoeia of to-day, and so may see a pretty example of history repeating itself.

Now I must bring to a close the account of my visit to Professor Attfield. I took my leave of the house at Watford with reluctance. Everything had combined to make the visit pleasant. I had had an example of how it is possible to be happy though successful, and how to communicate some of that happiness to others. In spite of what to most men would be a very serious, because long-standing, and apparently hereditary want of gastric power, the Professor gave one the impression of being and without doubt is, one of the happiest men in the world. This state of mind and his present position he is anxious to impress on one as being the outcome of influences almost entirely external to himself. Heredity, though to be debited with his gastric troubles, is yet to be credited with his methodical habits. He also was fortunate, he says, in his schoolmaster, "who ever insisted on the antipodean difference between culture and 'coaching'; and in a liberal father who ever encouraged his son to postpone the gaining of a livelihood until he had gained the requisite knowledge." The manufacturing chemist to whom he was articled, W. F. Smith, "was a trainer in tact and judgment no less than in experimental chemistry and practical pharmacy." He shall, he intimates, ever be indebted to the Pharmaceutical Society for the full professional education in 1853-54, and for the broad professorial platform the Society has afforded him since 1862. He does not forget the influences of "the model staff of great teachers, as well as great physicians and surgeons at dear old Bart's" from 1854 to 1862, nor the effect on him of "the breadth of view and high tone that has prevailed at the meetings of the Pharmacopoeia Committee of the Medical Council from 1883 to the present time." Respecting the editorship of the British Pharmacopoeia, he quotes old Wotton, "I am but a gatherer and a disposer of other men's stuff."

What we say is, "May such a gatherer and disposer be long spared to us!"